

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 020014

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ORIGIN ARA-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 020014

FOLLOWING REPEAT GEORGETOWN 0165 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
PARAMARIBO PORT OF SPAIN DTD 26 JAN

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 0165

WARNING NOTICE- SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE METHODS AND SOURCES
INVOLVED- NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2 (IMP TO DET)

TAGS: PFOR, GY, AO, CU

SUBJECT: CUBANS APPARENTLY SETTING UP REFUELING BASE HERE FOR
ANGOLAN AIRLIFT

REF: A) GEORGETOWN 0155 B) GEORGETOWN 0156

1. ACCORDING SOURCE AT AIRPORT BELIEVED TO BE RELIABLE,
DURING NIGHT JANUARY 25 CUBAN VESSEL 10 DE OCTUBRE OFF-LOADED
FOUR FUEL TANKS. TANKS WERE HAULED TO GUYANA DEFENSE FORCE (GDF)
INSTALLATION BESIDE AIRPORT AND INSTALLED. AME SOURCE (CON-
FIRMED BY SEA CAPTAIN IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION) INDICATED THAT
CUBAN SHIP HAS CONFIGURATION OF TANKER RATHER THAN PRIMARILY
CARGO VESSEL. SOURCE SAID THAT AS OF MID-MORNING JANUARY 26,
GDF TANKER TRUCKS WERE RECEIVING FUEL FROM CUBAN SHIP, TRANS-
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PAGE 02 STATE 020014

PORTING IT TONEWLY INSTALLED TANKS ON GDF COMPOUND ADJACENT TO

AIRPORT, AND DISCHARGING IT INTO THESE TANKS. ANOTHER SOURCE BELIEVED TO BE RELIABLE INDICATED THAT GDF HAS RECENTLY CLEANED OUT AND RENOVATED ONE OF OLD AVGAS TANKS AT TIMEHRI USED BY USAF IN WWII.

2. SAME AIRPORT SOURCE STATED THAT EARLY MORNING JANUARY 26, CUBAN PLANE IDENTIFIED AS CU-671 CUBANA CHARTER ARRIVED FROM HAVANA, REMAINED ON GROUND ONLY LONG ENOUGH TO PICK UP CREW FROM CU-699 (REF A) INCLUDING TWO FEMALES, THEN DEPARTED GIVING DESTINATION AS HAVANA. A SHORT WHILE LATER, ACCORDING SOURCE, SECOND CUBAN PLANE IDENTIFIED AS A BRITANNIA 318 ARRIVED FROM HAVANA. WHEN SOURCE LEFT AIRPORT THIS MORNING, SECOND CUBAN PLANE WAS STILL ON GROUND. SOURCE SPECULATED THAT SECOND PLANE COULD HAVE BROUGHT MECHANICS AND PARTS NECESSARY TO REPAIR CU-699, WHICH WAS STILL AT AIRPORT MORNING JANUARY 26. CALL-IN ALLEGING ENGINE TROUBLE BY CU-699 (REF A) AND DEPARTURE OF CREW WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT CU-699 IS DISABLED. IF CU-699 CONTAINED NON-AMBULATORY PASSENGERS, SOURCE WAS UNABLE TO OBSERVE THEM BOARD RELIEF FLIGHT.

3. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION OFFICER TOLD US FOUR BRITISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS HERE FOR ZOOLOGICAL STUDY PHOTOGRAPHED CU-699 AT AIRPORT. THEY WERE SEIZED BY POLICE OR GDF (UNCLEAR WHICH) AND HELD INCOMMUNICADO 14 HOURS, AFTER WHICH RELEASED, BUT CAMERAS CONFISCATED.

4. FRIENDLY GOVT INTELLIGENCE SOURCE CLAIMS TO HAVE CONFIRMED THAT MYSTERIOUS SHIPMENT ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE BY AIR (GEORGETOWN 36) WAS ON THIS SHIP.

5. ANOTHER SOURCE OF UNKNOWN RELIABILITY CLAIMS THAT NUMEROUS WOODEN BOXES OF ARMS AND LARGER CRATES WERE ALSO DISCHARGED FROM 10 DE OCTUBRE AT TIMEHRI DOCK EVENING JANUARY 26, BUT WE RESERVE JUDGMENT ON THAT REPORT PENDING CONFIRMATION.

6. STILL NOTHING IN PRESS OR ON RADIO ABOUT PLANES OR SHIP. TEXACO AND SHELL (GUYANESE NATIONALS) WERE UNAVAILABLE TO EMBOFF TODAY.

7. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT CUBANS WITH ACTIVE COOPERATION
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PAGE 03 STATE 020014

OF PM BURNHAM AND COMPLETE SUPPORT FROM GDR ARE SETTING UP REFUELING BASE FOR ANGOLA AIRLIFT ON GDF BASE ADJACENT TO AIRPORT, PRELIMINARILY CONFIRMING OUR SPECULATION PARA 3 REFTEL B. DEPARTMENT'S HOPE (STAT 9480, PARA 2-NOTAL) FOR GUYANESE RESTRAINT ON ANGOLA SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN IN VAIN. THIS JOINT GUYANESE-CUBAN COOPERATION ILLUSTRATES THEIR CLOSE COLLABORATION (75 GEORGETOWN 806 AND 75 GEORGETOWN 1636) WHICH COULD BY NOW BE TERMED A DEFACTO ALLIANCE.

8. ACTION REQUEST: LOCAL JOURNALIST CLAIMS PORTUGAL FINALLY
CUT OFF REFUELING OF CUBAN AIRLIFT AT AZORES ON JAN 17. WOULD
APPRECIATE INFORMATION ON WHETHER CUBAN AIRLIFT THROUGH AZORES HAS,
IN FACT, FINALLY BEEN CUT OFF. IN THAT EVENT, IT WOULD
APPEAR THAT GUYANA WILL BE PRINCIPAL REFUELING BASE FOR CUBAN-
ANGOLA AIRLIFT.
KREBS UNQTE KISSINGER

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